

# **Summary: Unfounded Allegation of Ethics Violation by a U.S. Geological Survey Employee**

**Report Date: April 21, 2021**

**Report Number: 19-0549**

The OIG investigated allegations that a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) employee gave preferential treatment to a contractor when the employee appeared to act on the contractor's behalf to obtain information about the statements of work on two contract solicitations.

We did not find evidence that the employee violated any ethics or procurement laws, regulations, or rules. While we confirmed that the employee contacted two other USGS employees with questions on behalf of the contractor, we did not find that the employee's questions impacted the awards of the contracts in question. The employee's supervisor twice warned the employee to stop communicating on behalf of the contractor, and the two other USGS employees cautioned the employee regarding the proper channels for the contractor to use to communicate with the USGS. We also did not find any evidence that the employee had a personal relationship with the contractor or personally benefited from any interactions with the contractor. We did not find any evidence the employee intended to violate conflict of interest rules, and the employee's conduct did not rise to the level that would warrant action.

This is a summary of an investigative report we issued to the USGS Associate Director.

